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WAR WITH ENGLAND.

THE CASE FAIRLY STATED;

WITH

AN ADDRESS

TO

PRESIDENT VAN BUREN

AND THE

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS;

WITH WHOM RESTS THE POWER OF PREVENTING

THAT CALAMITY.

BY AN ADVOCATE FOR PEACE.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Matthew.

NEW-YORK.

1838.

PRICE 12½ CENTS.

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To the President, Vice-President, and Members of the Senate and House of Representatives, in Congress assembled:

Gentlemen,

You cannot be ignorant of the events on *our* border, adjoining the British possessions, which are now of a year's continuance and upwards, during the greater part of which, a degree of excitement, alarm, and actual attack has been kept up, with an organized corps, supported by arms, artillery and munitions of war, furnished by *our* citizens, regardless of the law of nations.

With an earnest desire to preserve *our* relations of amity with England, I have been led to take the following view of the subject, to which I earnestly entreat your immediate attention, and that such measures as your wisdom may approve may be acted on so as to prevent war.

Spirit of John Jay.

New-Haven, Dec. 26, 1838.

WAR WITH ENGLAND.

THE advantages to be derived from a war with England, have been put forth and published from one end of the union to the other twelve months ago. The Express, one of the leading journals of New-York city, published a whole string of them, which has been extensively copied and circulated. That paper, at the time, warmly espoused the cause of the "patriots" as they are called; it has since, however, very prudently ceased to advocate their cause. It then spoke as follows:

"*Canadian Independence.*—As Americans, we cannot shut our eyes to what we are to gain by the independence of the Canadas, even while we urge upon the government the duty of strict neutrality.

"1. An eternal fence from European attack in the rear and flank of Maine, New-Hampshire, Vermont, New-York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

"2. A settlement without trouble of the north-eastern boundary question.

"3. The free navigation of the St. Lawrence, (almost as important to the Northern States, as the Mississippi is to the Southern and Western,) and then the free navigation of the St. Johns, is of the highest importance to Maine.

"4. The Fisheries—free and equal privileges in them; a strengthening of our marine and the crippling of the British marine.

"5. The end of the British monopoly of the fur trade, and the settlement of many disputes we must sooner or later have about this trade, in the Missouri Territory, on the Columbia river; for with the loss of the Canadas, British empire is lost in America.

"6. The addition of thousands of miles of a new interior to the city of New-York; the union by canal of New-York harbor with the St. Lawrence river; our own city, our own wharves, our own ships, our own merchants, our own laborers, made the channels and the agents of all the trade of the immense British possessions in the interior of North America.

"These, it strikes us, are great questions which no American *can* close his eyes to."—*New-York Express.*

Beside these advantages, others are set forth as follows:

The debt due, as well as the loans effected in England, for the construction of rail-roads, canals, and other improvements, exceeding one hundred and forty millions of dollars, would be swept away, and the country relieved from the payment of a large annual amount of interest, by which we should in a measure, be indemnified for the war.

"The excluding British manufactures and the building up of our own.

"The fostering our rising industry in the culture of silk; of our vines; of securing to ourselves vast commercial advantages, and in short, of becoming a truly independent people."

These are the advantages apparent from a war with England, and it may be added, that it would give employment in the army to those hot and turbulent spirits which pervade the land; and by the exclusion of foreign manufactures a vast augmentation of hands would be required to supply those articles which are now drawn from Europe.

This outline embraces the chief advantages to be derived from a war with England. A war with any other power could yield but a partial share of these advantages.

So much for one side of the question; let us now view the other, and calmly look at the evil consequences of a war, as well as the good, those which are certain, as well as those that are problematical; those near as well as remote. We shall then see whether the apparent advantages are real. It is only by viewing both sides of the question we can come to any thing like a just conclusion, and be roused to avert the calamity.

The first would be, the capture of our ships and seamen. It is not extravagant to say that in three months from the commencement of war, we should have few vessels afloat; England has lately not merely added largely to her naval force, but she has spread her steam-ships over every ocean; these would be commissioned as Letters of Marque, and brought to bear against us in such formidable array that the result would consequently be, the prostration and ruin of our commerce.

Then all our internal improvements of rail-roads and canals would be paralized if not suspended; their sources of emolument dried up, and joint stock companies ruined.

The entire foreign trade of the Southern States in cotton, would be cut off.

But even more fearful consequences are involved. It is in the power of the British to throw into the Southern States thousands of free negroes, and thereby call forth all those horrors so fearfully dreaded from the slave population, and thus the atrocious acts of the border sympathizers inflicted on the Canadians, would be visited on the Southern States, which seem listless of the evils now being perpetrated on the frontier from Maine to Wisconsin.

Again, the Indians on the Western border, would be up in arms, and under present circumstances, they should be feared. They have been but recently torn from their fires and hunting grounds; they have left the bones of their fathers behind. Many of their leaders believe that it is determined to drive them over the Rocky Mountains into the waters of the Pacific Ocean. They feel their wrongs; they can soon be concentrated, and would gladly seize an opportunity for revenge, while the whole border possessions would be desolated by the tomahawk, and dyed with the blood of the inhabitants.

The destruction of Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Oswego, Ogdensburgh, and all the border towns and villages would assuredly ensue. But would the British stop there? Let us examine into the present position and power of England. The ambition of Russia, united England, France and the Porte; Austria also, leans to England, of which we have evidence in the late treaty. Therefore there is no near prospect of a continential war, so that she would put forth her whole undivided strength, and according to the Wellington maxim, England can never go into a *little war.*

Let us not deceive ourselves! we must not forget the vast power of steam, so successfully used by England; the immense advantages she would derive from her steam ships at such a crisis. She could transport an army to any contemplated point of attack, of which no information could be gained before its arrival. We should be subject to continual surprises, which would inevitably result in ruinous consequences, as is the case with the Canadians at this hour, by the acts of the citizen "sympathizers." The creation of a debt of three or four hundred millions might be fairly anticipated; as also the recalling from the states the surplus revenue, lately distributed among them. The war would be one called forth by unjust aggression against Canada, of great and unqualified wrong, and we cannot be so mad as to suppose that the sword once drawn by England, in defence of her injured subjects, would be sheathed by protestations to *cease* invading her Canadian possessions.

Will the people of Canada be content upon entering into a new treaty not to invade their territory, like thieves and robbers, under the plea of forcing institutions upon them against their inclination? Is this sufficient? Are there no wrongs to be vindicated? No insults to be avenged? On the contrary, it must be seen that not only will severe and just retribution fall upon the border sympathizers, but indemnity would be claimed for all the losses and all the devastation the citizens have caused.

Did ever a people enjoying such prosperity as we do, unprovoked as we have been, plunge their country into a war, to further the views of men reckless of consequences and desti-

tute of principle as some of our borderers are ? Are not the Canadians valuable customers ? Are not great advantages derived from trading with them ? What wrongs have they inflicted upon the citizens this side of the St. Lawrence, that for more than a year should have exposed those hitherto confiding neighbors, to all the horrors of a war ? And can any person suppose that England will longer endure these invasions, nor stand forth in defence of her rights for the protection of her subjects ?

Bring the case home to ourselves, it is the only way to argue. Did any foreign power on earth permit its people to make aggressions on our territory, to carry fire and sword into our land for months, to scourge and devestate, and attempt to dictate to us how we should be governed, as our citizens have been and are still doing to the Canadians, would we remain idle, listless, enduring, passive ? Is it necessary to ask my fellow-citizens what our conduct would be under such circumstances ? All would march forth to avenge the insult, to redress the wrong. Would those so attacked be satisfied with the apology offered to England, viz : "Our laws do not reach the cause of complaint,"—"Our state laws we cannot control,"—"The citizens engaged in these affairs, are the idle, the profligate and the worthless, and the army is not sufficiently numerous?"—No ! Redress—punishment of the aggressors, would be our watch-word, and we should teach that power that if it could not punish the aggressions of its evil disposed subjects or citizens we would do so ourselves. And can any one imagine England will remain passive ? Does not the same blood run in her veins, the same high sense of honor pervade the people ? And

though towards us she has forborne long to put herself in an hostile attitude, out of regard to the ties that should, and I trust may even yet continue to bind us in one common union of heart and feeling, yet it cannot be expected she will longer endure the sufferings of her subjects, as Canada demands action.

What then is to be done? But one thing remains. It is for our citizens, for our own honor, sense of justice, and love of peace, apart from any other feeling, to rise, *en masse*, to call upon Congress to increase the army; our merchants to lay aside all party spirit, sustain the Executive in all measures to uphold the laws, and not continue to treat with contempt those efforts still in progress, notwithstanding the defeats sustained by the brigands, so as to put down at once these border outrages, and murders committed by our citizens, whereby Canada is in a state of siege at this hour. It is understood that a loud call has gone forth from Canada, which will not be in vain; so that but a few weeks may pass over our heads before England will demand that our treaty shall be observed.

The history of nations does not furnish an instance of a war more unjustly provoked. Who can suppose that England is dead to her former glories? She must be indeed fallen and degraded in the eyes of nations, and of her loyal subjects in Canada, if our citizens are longer permitted to make war upon Canada unavenged; but we are not, as a people, lost to justice and honor. It cannot be upheld for a moment that our laws do not reach the offence. If any one of our citizens is ill-treated, the general government will interpose, and he will obtain redress; the nation will vindicate the wrongs of the

humblest citizen; and so, in like manner, are we bound to punish every citizen for an act of aggression against the laws and the general government.

This appeal is not made alone to point out the immorality, the injustice of our citizens, who have for more than a year carried on such acts of violence, against men whom we should regard as "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," but to point out, ere it is too late, the consequences that will assuredly await those acts of aggression, rapine and murder, continued against our neighbors, a people from whom we are ourselves descended, a people who contribute more to our prosperity than any other, a people who alone cherish the principles of liberty in common with ourselves.

It is true, one or more of the nations of Europe would rejoice in a war between us and England. The Autocrat of all the Russias, the *sympathizer* with Poland and Circassia, would rejoice; he would cheer us on, and gladly unite his forces with ours. What! could the sons of liberty league with Russia against the only nation on earth, besides our own, which holds with us the rights of man sacred? Contemplate so unholy an alliance?

Let us then shake off our apathy; rouse into action! repress the criminal acts committed within our border, in violalation of our treaties; sustain our laws, and return to those pursuits which have afforded us as a people unparalleled prosperity.

There is one more reason why a war with England would be highly disadvantageous and disastrous. It is, that in the event of driving her from this continent, our success would be

more unfortunate than defeat. The possession of the Canadas, or their independence, would be the signal for the separation of the states : the British power acts as a hoop; it keeps together the union. Who does not see that Canada would, with the Eastern States, form one great confederacy ? Who among us has not fears that these free states will not continue united with the slave-holding states ? Look at Washington at this hour ; observe, the passions between the North and South are in continual array ; and say, can there be any question as to the result ?

But why should we imagine that England will give up her possessions or desert her subjects, who, if we can believe their statement, cherish British connexion ? The power of England *must be destroyed before she will suffer the Canadas to be wrested from her by force ;* a different policy may one day or other produce a separation, if desired.

One word to the borderers, on whom will fall the maledictions of the citizens throughout the union, as the promoters of all the misery, loss of property, and blood which will be shed—apart from the burning of your towns and villages, the first step of the evil you will have created, look not for indemnity, as was the case in the last war ; that was a war avowedly to vindicate the rights of the nation, and even then Congress was unwilling to admit the principle, which is one of very questionable policy ; but this is a war of your own creation—a war brought on by your own folly and wickedness—a war that instead of redounding to your honor, as the promoters of it, will redound to your loss and infamy. Not one cent will

Congress pay in indemnification ; but, instead of indemnity for your burned towns, villages, and property, your fellow-citizens will load you with reproaches, and amid all the calamities you will have entailed upon the citizens at large, still the hottest vengeance will fall where it deserves to fall, on your devoted heads ; and that sympathy you affect to manifest to relieve the oppressed, will be denied you by all good men and honest citizens.

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